

KNOX COUNTY COMMISSION

Special Meeting – Work Session

Tuesday - March 10, 2009 - 2:00 p.m.

A special meeting – work session of the Knox County Commission was held on Tuesday, March 10, 2009, at 2:00 p.m., at the county courthouse, 62 Union Street, Rockland, Maine. Administrative Assistant Candice Richards was present to record the minutes of the meeting.

Commission members present were: Anne Beebe-Center, Commissioner District #1, Richard L. Parent, Jr., Commissioner District #2, and Roger A. Moody, Commissioner District #3. County staff present included: County Administrator Andrew Hart, Administrative Assistant Candice Richards, Sheriff Donna Dennison, Jail Administrator John Hinkley, Communications Linwood Lothrop, EMA Director Ray Sisk and IT Director Jeff Lake.

Other people present: Kim Lincoln from the *Gazette Herald*.

Special Meeting – Work Session – Agenda		
Tuesday – March 10, 2009 – 2:00 p.m.		
I.	2:00	Meeting Called To Order
II.	2:01	Discussion Items
		1. Discussion Concerning Commissioner Richard Parents’ Research on Sheriff/EMA/KRCC Space Options.
		2. Discussion of Goals and Priorities Implementation; Including Discussion between Commission and County Administrator Regarding Timetables for Space Needs Assessment, Tentative Meeting Dates with Lincoln and Waldo Commissioners, Municipal Managers, and First Selectmen.
		3. Set Date to Learn More about IT and Finance “Infrastructure”.
III.		Adjourn

I. Meeting Called to Order
Commission Chair Anne Beebe-Center called the March 10, 2009 special meeting - work session of the Knox County Commission to order at 2:00 p.m. The Commissioners and County Administrator moved to sit at the conference table. The department heads were then invited to sit at the table and take part in the discussion.

II. Discussion Items
1. Discussion Concerning commissioner Richard Parents’ Research on Sheriff/EMA/KRCC Space Options.
Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center explained that the Commission felt that the Commissioners needed a chance to learn, through conversation, some of the information behind current issues. It had been decided to do this before the business meeting. There was an agenda to direct the discussion.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center asked Commissioner Richard Parent to start the discussion by relating what he had recently learned about space at the Maine DOT building.

Commissioner Richard Parent explained that he had toured the Maine DOT building and then gone to do the same thing at the Wiscasset facility, which is smaller than the DOT building. The Wiscasset facility is around 3,000 square feet, while the DOT building on Rankin Street is around 3,200 or 3,600 square feet. The Rankin Street building has approximately 4,000 square feet on one floor, and a basement that can be utilized. He stated that he believes the DOT building has a lot of potential but that it will take a lot of money to upgrade the building to something that will meet the needs of the County. He added that he still believed it would cost less than constructing a new building from scratch.

Communications Linwood Lothrop stated that he had a lot of concerns about the DOT building. There are a lot of issues, including the structural soundness, there is no generator, water leaks and the environmental problems that are a result of that, mold, ventilation issues. The integrity of the tower is questionable. It needs to be looked at by an expert to determine whether it would be able to withstand the load that the County would need to put on it. It is at the end of its life expectancy so it would need to be determined if it would be better to replace the tower or to overhaul it. The building has a flat roof, which is covered with a rubber membrane that has holes in it, although no one is sure where the holes are. Ceiling tiles are stained from past water leaks, but is unknown if this is because of the plumbing or because of the roof leaking. The building

would need to be looked at very carefully and thoroughly by professionals who know what to be looking for, to see what needs to be done to meet the needs of the departments.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center asked if Director Lothrop thought that rehabbing the building was more expensive than starting from scratch.

Communications Linwood Lothrop stated that it is unknown what the footprint of the building would be and that should be determined before looking at the site to see where the com center would be in relation to where the radios, backup power supply, etc. would need to be put. There needs to be a better understanding of what would need to go where before looking at putting the department into that specific space.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center asked if the tower is tall enough.

Commissioner Richard Parent replied that it is.

Communications Linwood Lothrop stated that propagation studies had been done to determine if the tower was tall enough at 75 feet. It is adequate in height but the condition of the tower itself is another issue. The height of the tower is legal because it is currently grandfathered.

Commissioner Roger Moody asked if the tower height would still be legal if it had to be replaced.

Communications Linwood Lothrop replied that an ordinance had been past last year allowing for public safety towers for emergency communications use up to 90 feet.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center asked if it was still being considered that all three departments were going to be moved or if that had changed.

County Administrator Andrew Hart stated that the decision has yet to be made how many departments would move from their current location. The contracted needs assessment studied three departments: the Patrol, EMA, and Communications. If the County decides to go with the DOT building it will probably have to be paired back to two departments instead of all three. Both the Dispatch Advisory Board and the Executive Board both felt that it made sense to have the EOC and Communications co-located. The Commission would need to decide if all three departments should be relocated or not. It makes sense to have the Sheriff's Office co-located with the jail because of the command structure.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center asked what should be done about the Sheriff Office then if they also needed more space. She asked if the space left behind by Communications would begin to meet the space needs of the Sheriff's Office.

County Administrator Andrew Hart stated that the space currently being occupied by the jail administration, Patrol, and Communications is intermingled. If Communications moves out it does not really free up that much space. It is unknown how much it would cost to make the space usable by the jail administration for offices. It is also unknown what will happen with the jail as it now belongs to the State.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center asked if there was a timeline for what will happen with the jail.

Jail Administrator John Hinkley stated that space needs for the jail will not decrease as time goes on, but will probably increase instead. The Knox Jail may become a Pretrial facility, which could mean holding inmates for up to two years. The jail may also hold sentenced individuals, who could remain in the jail for up to 90 days. The Knox Jail will also be holding inmates from Waldo. Waldo County has already submitted their initial plan to go to a 72-hour and re-enter facility. This is still waiting for approval. Long-term sentencing inmates will go to the Two-Bridges jail. Mr. Hinkley added that because of the change in use for the Knox Jail, the capacity rating for the variance can change, which means the Knox Jail could potentially be allowed to hold more than 80 inmates. It does not take up as much space to house Pre-trial inmates.

Sheriff Donna Dennison commented that if Dispatch moves out of the jail, the jail administrator's staff can move into the vacated spaces. It will solve the short term space needs but not the long term.

Commissioner Roger Moody stated that he was having a hard time wrapping his head around the 30,000 square feet figure estimate suggested by QA13. He asked about the square footage of the Maine DOT building.

Commissioner Richard Parent stated that it was 4,000 square feet upstairs but that he was not aware of the square footage downstairs.

It was suggested that it was probably about 1,600 square feet downstairs, so the two floors combined was between 5,000 and 6,000 square feet.

Commissioner Roger Moody stated that if the Commission looked at this building as a long-term plan, this space is a lot less than what QA13 said was needed. He asked if it was realistic to look at the space. It is on an acre and a half of land but is the site expandable?

Communications Linwood Lothrop stated that according to QA13 estimates, his department was going from 312 square feet to 4,000, which is a huge difference. He stated that his main issue is to get the com center set up and needing the extra room equal to growing by two more operator positions. Once that is set up and the equipment is in place, he just needs a couple offices, one for himself and one for his supervisor. The rest can be shared space for training and meeting spaces for the EOC. He added that the only other need would be a bathroom directly off of the com center so that employees do not have to go too far away from their work station. Bathrooms and kitchen facilities should be in close proximity but would be shared space. As long as the space is laid out properly and done to code, he would be happy.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center stated that it was mentioned that Wiscasset was running out of space. She asked how much square footage they currently had.

Commissioner Richard Parent responded that Wiscasset has a combined 3,600 square feet with the building having two floors. Wiscasset cannot expand at that location. They do have a garage/basement that can be converted to storage space but nothing else. Wiscasset does need storage space, but they are also in need of more parking space and there is no expansion room for that.

EMA Director Ray Sisk stated that one thing that is an issue at the DOT building is the availability of parking. For the EOC and other types of training sessions there is definitely not enough parking there to accommodate the number of people that would attend the training, let alone the employees that would already be parking there each day for work. It is estimated that there are about 30 parking spaces and that this is usually the number of people coming for training. The property is also fairly close to the neighborhood and by moving there, the County would be bringing in more traffic. Mr. Sisk stated that one thing that made him uncomfortable looking at specific properties is that the County still has not really nailed down what is needed for space. He stated that the QA13 estimate of 30,000 square feet is way beyond what the County currently needs. Right now, EMA occupies about 1,100 square feet. He added that even if Communications moves out of their current location, he did not see how the Sheriff's Office can efficiently function in the limited space. He stated that his personal opinion was that any investment that does not meet the needs of all three departments is not the best investment for the County to make. The space needs projected the amount of EMA space needed for the next ten years, including an EOC space which would be 95 percent combined meeting space and about five percent designated EOC space. Most of the space needs to be multi-purpose space. Mr. Sisk stated that he had come up with about 3,000 square feet for EMA, which is significantly less than the QA13 estimate. He added that he felt that QA13 had made their estimates of space needs based on each department having their own dedicated space instead of having some areas, like training space, used by more than one department. This requires more space than if departments share. Looking at specific properties like the DOT building is putting the cart before the horse until the County identifies just how much space each department really needs for now and for ten to fifteen years in the future.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center asked if sitting down with QA13 and the department heads and cutting back the 30,000 square feet estimate was the next step. She asked if there was a timeline with QA13 to work on those estimates.

County Administrator Andrew Hart stated that he was trying to get that set up with QA13. He stated that he had called Ken Schiano the week before but had not heard back from him, possibly because Mr. Schiano had been out sick.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center what should be done about the DOT property in the meantime.

Commissioner Richard Parent stated that the County may want to option in because there are others interested in the DOT building. It would not be fair for the County to ask the owners to wait for the County to make a decision because it could be some time before the County is ready to make a decision.

Commissioner Roger Moody stated that it would be hard to make the June referendum date. If the County acted fast it might be possible, but would still be difficult. He stated that he would appreciate having more realistic square footage numbers. During the Public Hearing, Roger Lichtman had stated that the County could potentially save 20 percent by renovating a building instead of building a new one. There are some expenses that the County will have no matter which option is chosen. On a \$10 million project, 20 percent is \$2 million dollars. There is about 5,600 square feet at the DOT building and EMA needs 3,000, which leaves 2,600 for Communications. The County would need to look at whether or not the space is expandable and the footprint, including parking space. He added that while the DOT building does have some problems, they are not major problems. The County is going to need to install a generator no matter where the departments end up located.

Commissioner Richard Parent stated that he thought that the drainage issues, which may have been causing mold, might have been fixed already. The leaking had been attributed to an area around the chimney but he was told it had been corrected. The building has a twenty-year-old roof, which is at the life expectancy of a rubber roof.

Commissioner Roger Moody stated that it had been brought up previously that the Maine DOT was extremely anxious to get rid of the building and that the price looked like a bargain.

Commissioner Richard Parent stated that the Commission needed to get some sort of feel for whether or not to proceed.

Commissioner Roger Moody stated that the Sheriff's Office space needs should not be left out of the discussion because that department needs space too.

Jail Administrator John Hinkley stated that he was worried that the jail will not have enough space. There is currently no program space because it is being used for offices. The inmate programs, such as the GED and other learning programs, help inmates be able to go back out into society. Right now there is no space to operate these programs. The little offices being used by jail staff are not really offices but were originally closets. Even if the jail becomes a Pretrial facility or some other type of facility, the jail will still need program space for the inmates. If Dispatch moves out of the jail, it might be possible to move the staff around some so that the space could be used for programs again.

Commissioner Roger Moody asked if Mr. Hinkley was saying that if Dispatch moves out, that the jail and the Sheriff's Office would be able to work things out between them to that both departments could live with the space they have for a few more years.

Sheriff Donna Dennison stated that it would not be ideal, but that the two departments would be able to get by.

Jail Administrator John Hinkley stated that the reality is that even if Dispatch moves out, it does not free up a lot of space. The jail administration does not have enough space.

County Administrator Andrew Hart stated that he did not want to spend \$10 million but that he also did not want to do something so cheap that only solves the short term needs so that in a few years the County will have to look at this all over again. It is better to do this right to begin with instead of having to go before the voters in two to ten years and tell them the County needs more space. The County has already been discussing this problem for 15 years. He stated that he was concerned with doing the process too fast. While it is important to save the tax payers money now, it could potentially cost the County in the long run if the process is rushed, not just in money costs but also damage the County in the public view. The Old County Road project was rushed forward without having looked at the actual space needs for the County, and then it ended up costing the County money to get out of it.

Commissioner Roger Moody stated that what matters is what the voters will actually approve. Voters may never approve a new building, but they may approve a renovation project. Whatever plan the Commission decides to go with needs to be well planned out.

Some other factors were mentioned of why voters might not approve either a construction or renovation project, including the numbers of PSAP's in the State, the uncertain nature of the future of the Knox Jail, and because of the current state of the economy.

EMA Director Ray Sisk stated that if the County does this in a faithfully executed process, does everything possible for grant processing, gets the work, including the needs assessment, done

ahead of time, then the County may have federal dollars on the way, but that will never happen if things are not planned right.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center asked if things needed to be refocused. She stated that the DOT building is an opportunity. She asked if the Commission needed to see what it would entail to have the DOT building made fit for County use.

Communications Linwood Lothrop stated that right now that would be difficult to do since the County is still not sure what the footprint is. It could take years and a lot of money for engineers to assess that building to see if it will fit Communications' needs. John Hansen has looked at that building before so it may be a good idea to get his opinion on whether it is worth taking a second look at the building. The departments need to sit down with QA13 and identify a realistic footprint that the County can live with. He added that he did not think that 30,000 square feet is a realistic estimate.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center asked if there was a specific timeline to meet with QA13 and to see if there was time enough to do anything about the DOT building. The DOT people may not be willing to wait.

Commissioner Richard Parent stated that he believed that the DOT people had expected to hear back from the County within a couple weeks whether or not the County was interested in the building.

County Administrator Andrew Hart stated that he did not think there was enough time to meet with QA13 to cut back the square footage estimate and define a footprint. He believed that the DOT representatives would expect to hear from the County before that.

Communications Linwood Lothrop stated that in his opinion, the discussion sounded like the County was about to go down the same road as it had with the Old County Road project. He added that just because the option is there does not mean the County should go for it. If it is rushed it will end badly the way the Old County Road project did. He stated that he did not want the mistake to be made again. It is better to take the extra time to do it right and see what becomes available down the road. The real estate market is not the best right now, so there is a pretty good chance the DOT building will still be available even if the County waited.

EMA Director Ray Sisk stated that with the Old County Road project the County had not followed a clear process, or developed a well-prepared plan, that could be presented to the taxpayers. Unless the County does that, the voters will never pass it, no matter how perfect of a deal it is.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center stated that to her it sounded like the County should tell the DOT people that the County is not ready. If they can give the County more time, that would be great, but if not, that is just the way it is. QA13 should be contacted to find out how soon they can sit down with the County to determine the footprint.

Commissioner Roger Moody asked how this fit into what QA13 was hired to do. During the public hearing, QA13 indicated that their work was 90 percent done. If the County wants them to do more work than what they were already asked to do, we will have to pay them more. He asked if there was a way to get an option for the DOT building at a cheap price so that they could hold the building six months.

Commissioner Richard Parent replied that he did not know and that the question was never asked.

It was commented that the Maine DOT building has been on sale for many years. There is also a lot of commercial property for sale in the County and much of it has been for sale for a long time because of the economy.

County Administrator Andrew Hart commented that he has been contacted at least once a week by individuals who want the County to come look at their property. He added that he did not know if the Commission is interested in leasing or buying. He stated that after the Old County Road project, he got the impression that the Commission would be more interested in buying than leasing property. He stated that either way, this time the County needs to get more information out to the public. Leasing to purchase obligates the taxpayers to eventually buy it.

There was a discussion of the pro's and con's of leasing property. If the County puts money into a leased building, when the County leaves, that is money lost. It is too expensive to move dispatch equipment if leasing because it means moving again once the lease is up.

There was a discussion of the possibility of renovating a building in another town besides the County seat of Rockland. If the County constructs a new building it has to be in Rockland, but the law does not say anything about renovation. Some options mentioned were the Warren school, which needs complete renovation and has communications and transportation challenges, and the Rockport Elementary School building, which may or may not have expansion room. Parking space would also be an issue. A lot of factors need to be looked at when looking at the environmental considerations, including proximity to commercial traffic and transportation, and other needs for both EMA and Communications. The possibility of future expansion on the property, either for more building space or for more parking, is also a very important consideration.

Commissioner Roger Moody asked if it was known what QA13 will or will not do. He added that if John Hanson had information about the DOT building, then the Commission should seek his expertise.

Commissioner Richard Parent commented that Rockland had looked at the DOT building and surrounding property on Rankin Street mainly for the garage, which turned out to not be a part of that property.

Communications Director Linwood Lothrop stated that he had been involved in that study because Rockland had been considering having a combined location with Knox County. As part of the study, John Hanson looked at some of the issues that Knox County would need if co-located with Rockland Police.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center asked if the County was done with QA13 other than receiving the final report.

County Administrator Andrew Hart stated that we are still waiting for the final report. He stated that he had a discussion with QA13 about coming back in for a discussion with the department heads to work on cutting back the square footage estimate of 30,000 square feet. He added that he was waiting to hear back from QA13 on when that would happen.

Commissioner Roger Moody asked if this was part of the contract.

County Administrator Hart stated that he had asked Ken Schiano of QA13 this question. Mr. Schiano was going to ask Roger Lichtman of Lichtman Associates and report back.

Commissioner Richard Parent asked if the County would use QA13 to determine the needs and then use John Hanson to determine if the space will fit our space needs.

County Administrator Andrew Hart stated that this was correct and that if the County is going to use John Hanson, it will need to be determined how much he would charge the County. He stated that he had asked that QA13 meeting with department heads and establishing the County's footprint to be considered part of the existing contract. This should have been done prior to the public hearing but at the time the County was trying to meet the deadline for the grant.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center stated that the County needs a shorter timeline with QA13 so that other work can be done and the public can be updated. It needs to be decided whether or not to pursue the DOT building by pursuing an option, if possible, and whether or not to have John Hanson look at the building for the County.

Commissioner Roger Moody suggested adding this topic to the Other Business portion of the Regular Commission Meeting agenda so that the Commission could discuss authorizing an option with the DOT building. Even though it is unknown how much an option would cost, the Commission should ask some questions. A Special Commission meeting may be a possibility if QA13 comes up with some options and the Commission needs to make a decision.

County Administrator Andrew Hart stated that if QA13 did not ask for additional money he would go ahead and schedule meetings with the department heads to scale back the square footage estimates. If QA13 does want additional money, he will argue the matter because it should be included as part of the contract. The department heads need to have some input in the footprint of the County because they know what their own requirements and needs are, including ADA requirements.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center asked if the County had already paid the entire amount owed for the contracted services with QA13.

County Administrator Andrew Hart responded that the County has paid QA13 all but ten percent of the \$45,000 because that is how the contract was written. The last ten percent will be paid upon receipt of the final report. Fifty percent of the \$45,000 was paid by the EMA grant through Homeland Security. Homeland Security grants will also help with future expenses with this project as long as EMA is part of it. There will need to be some renovations done to the space at the jail, currently occupied by Communications, once they move out. Once the equipment is out of there, it will just be a big open space, so some modifications will need to be made so that the space is usable by either the jail or the Sheriff's Office.

Sheriff Donna Dennison stated that she was expecting some federal forfeiture money to be coming in soon and that it is possible that forfeiture funds can be used to help with renovations or an addition.

Commissioner Roger Moody stated that it would be helpful for the Commission to look at reserve and forfeiture funds to see what is available to use towards this project. He asked about the percentage paid by federal dollars for EMA projects.

EMA Director Ray Sisk stated that federal money pays fifty percent of EMA normal operations that fall within the EOC grant program. If approved, that would give the County up to \$1 million for new construction or \$250,000 for renovations.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center stated that this only applied to the EMA's one-third of the project.

EMA Director Ray Sisk stated that this was correct, and that is why it makes sense to have as many multi-departmentally used spaces as possible.

Commissioner Roger Moody asked if the grant money was done as a reimbursement.

EMA Director Ray Sisk stated that it is usually done as reimbursement.

County Administrator Andrew Hart stated that some money had already been put into three separate reserve accounts, one for each of the three departments, as part of the budget process in preparation for this. The only money spent from this so far is the \$45,000 for QA13, although most of it came out of the EMA reserve line so that the County could get the matched funds from Homeland Security.

EMA Director Ray Sisk stated that it was justified to do it that way because of the EMA requirement to do a space assessment.

Communications Linwood Lothrop gave a brief explanation of legislation currently being developed that deals with Public Safety Answering Points and the E-9-1-1 system, including LD's 264, 555, and 597. He explained that he would also be testifying before the Energy and Utilities Commission regarding one of these bills.

Commissioner Roger Moody commented that he wondered how possible it would be to work with another county for some of the emergency services. He suggested doing something along the line of having Knox responsible for communications for both counties and have Lincoln responsible for EMA for both counties. He asked if doing something like this would make sense,

Communications Linwood Lothrop stated that there would be a lot of issues with that. It would be better to pair off with Waldo County rather than Lincoln County if Knox was going to do anything like that with another county. It is not as easy to combine resources like that as it sounds. Knox County already has a working plan with Waldo County to cover each other if there is a problem with Communications services, but it is only a temporary thing during an emergency situation. The counties meet every few months to review and update the plans and procedures. Knox County did take over Waldo's communications when they had a problem and could not get their generator started. He added that he was not sure how much consolidation of PSAP's there will end up being. Knox, Lincoln, and Waldo Counties have discussed joining together if the State decides to consolidate PSAP's further than they already have. There are still some unknowns. Terrain issues can prevent full dispatch consolidation. Each County also uses different equipment. Combining the three counties, however, would still be better than if the State decided to take over and completely consolidate the PSAP's into one State-run facility. There would be a lot of problems with that, including the fact that it would not save the taxpayers any money. It will be clearer what path the State will take after March 16th.

2. Discussion of Goals and Priorities Implementation; Including Discussion between Commission and County Administrator Regarding Timetables for Space Needs Assessment, Tentative

Meeting Dates with Lincoln and Waldo Commissioners, Municipal Managers, and First Selectmen.

Commissioner Roger Moody explained that this agenda item contained some of the subjects discussed at the last work session. He stated that he had updated the list of priorities for 2009 by adding action words in front of each bulleted point. The list now looks as follows:

“KNOX COUNTY COMMISSION PRIORITIES FOR 2009

Developed by the Commission during a work session on February 10, 2009.

- 1) Space Needs
 - a) Sheriff/KRCC/EMA Options to New Construction:
Evaluate the MDOT Building, the Rockport Elementary School, and the Warren brick schoolhouse
 - b) Develop a Master plan for courthouse existing spaces
 - c) Provide for ADA access to courthouse County spaces
 - d) Construct New Terminal Building at Knox County Airport
 - e) Provide a High Standard of Maintenance to Existing County Buildings and Spaces
- 2) Commissioners/Administrator
 - a) Monitor Effectiveness of Commission Meeting times / frequency
 - b) Establish and Monitor Effectiveness of Common Commission/Administrator goals
 - c) Enhance Press relations
 - d) Adopt a Policy for Administrator Authority for signing documents on Behalf of the Commission
 - e) Set a work session before each regular commission meeting
- 3) Commission/Administration Goals for 2009
 - a) Make timely decisions to Impact 2010 Budget by Initiating Cost Savings (2 more Budget Committee meetings before 2010 budget cycle)
 - b) Help notify towns of Budget Committee vacancies to keep the Budget Committee Operating at Full Membership Level
 - c) Initiate Meetings / forums (2) with Town Managers and 1st Selectmen to identify mutual needs and resources
 - d) Meet with Lincoln County Commissioners and Administrator to discuss common needs and ways to address them
 - e) Meet with Waldo County Commissioners and Administrator to discuss common needs and ways to address them
 - f) Understand Knox “infrastructure”, such as Information Technology and Finance software, etc.
 - g) Address Space Needs as described in 1) above”

Commissioner Richard Parent asked when the 2010 budget process began.

County Administrator Andrew Hart stated that budget forms and capital improvement worksheets are submitted to department heads in July. Those are then due back in to the administrator at the end of August. The administrator and finance director begin meeting with department heads in the first week of September to go over the budget proposed by the department head.

EMA Director Ray Sisk stated that he had some forms that had to be submitted to the State in July, so for his office, he works on budgets year-round.

Sheriff Donna Dennison commented that the jail budget is now on a fiscal budget year like the State and runs July – June.

Jail Administrator John Hinkley stated that his budget is all set as far as the County is concerned. It has already been submitted to the Board of Corrections.

County Administrator Andrew Hart stated that he and Building Maintenance Supervisor Jon Grout had met with the State to discuss renewing the Memorandum of Understanding for the use of space in the courthouse by the State. The State wants the County to renovate the Superior courtroom by having the walls repainted. This will be expensive because it requires a special kind of paint and all of the scaffolding has to be carried up there by hand. Some of the painting is detailed stencil-work and must be done by hand. There are not a lot of painters who can do this work. The State is asking about this now so that if the County asks the State to pay for half of it, they can build it into their budget. The State is not required to pay half, but it seemed to make

sense for them to do so since the County pays for half of everything else. The County will need to get an estimate for renovating the Superior courtroom. It could take a couple months to complete the project and has to be coordinated with the State to work around the court schedule. Some of the court cases may need to be moved to either Lincoln or Waldo County. The State has also received grant money to make some ADA required improvements.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center stated that a lot of maintenance needs to be done to county buildings, but the Budget Committee routinely put off the costs until the following year. The tradition of the Commission has been to not spend money on maintenance issues but now the County has to spend the money because some issues have reached the point where they cannot be put off, some because of the risk of liability.

County Administrator Andrew Hart stated that the only thing he wanted to mention with regards to the goals for 2009/2010 was that there are currently a lot of internal issues that he is dealing with and that he believed it important to resolve the internal issues before working on external ones. Meeting with Lincoln and Waldo is important and needs to be done but there are some internal things that need to be in place first.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center stated that she agreed, but that the Commission needs to know about what is being done in other counties and what the opportunities are.

Commissioner Roger Moody stated that even if the Commission meets with other counties it does not mean that any action will be taken right away.

County Administrator Andrew Hart stated that it would be helpful to know beforehand what topics should be discussed with the other counties.

Commissioner Richard Parent stated that the pooling of resources should be discussed with other counties.

EMA Director Ray Sisk asked if the County had ever given any serious consideration to asking municipalities what the County could do for centralized services.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center stated that this was asked four years ago. She stated that there was a pretty good turnout. During the discussion there was about three hours of County-bashing and then there was an actual helpful conversation. Eventually, for a variety of reasons, the conversations stopped.

Communications Director Linwood Lothrop stated that during the tenure of the first county administrator, the County facilitated a conversation in South Thomaston about ambulance coverage in the County during the daytime. Animal Control Officers were also discussed.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center stated that services come with a cost but it is the reluctance to have the conversation that is the real problem. People may now be willing to have those conversations again because things have changed.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center stated that the Commission needed to decide what to do at the next work session. She added that they should come up with an agenda within two weeks so that it is not last minute. She asked if anyone had any other concerns or questions that should be addressed.

Commissioner Richard Parent stated that he had wanted to talk about the Restitution Policy.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center stated that the reason this was not on the agenda because it was going to take a while to get the information.

Commissioner Richard Parent stated that he just wanted to know what the Restitution Policy was. He stated that he had been contacted by a member of the public who asked him to do something about the Restitution Policy. The individual told him that in Knox County, if someone were to commit a crime which involved a business losing money, like a theft or a bad check, the business has to wait until all of the restitution money is collected before they get any of it. If the person paying back the money takes years to do it, the business is stuck waiting until all of it has been collected. This can be really damaging to businesses. In Lincoln County, the money is passed on to the business as it comes in. The business does not have to wait for it to all be paid back before getting their money returned to them.

Sheriff Dennison explained the process. The SO does not handle this. It is handled by the Clerk of Courts office. She stated that a judge is the one to order that restitution money be paid, which

is not something handled by the County, but the State. She added that the Victim Witness Advocate collects the money. If someone has a complaint about not receiving their restitution money they need to speak with the Victim Witness Advocate. If the judge orders a person to pay restitution, and that person does not comply, a warrant can be put out for their arrest. The restitution money is not handled by the Sheriff's Office.

Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center stated that this was something that the Commission should try to find out more about.

3. Set Date to Learn More about IT and Finance "Infrastructure".
This topic will be discussed during the Regular Commission Meeting.

III. Adjourn

- A motion was made by Commissioner Richard Parent to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Roger Moody. A vote was taken with all in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 3:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Candice Richards

**The Knox County Commission approved these minutes at their regular meeting
held on April 14, 2009.**

Anne H. Beebe-Center, Chair – Commissioner District #1

Richard L. Parent, Jr. – Commissioner District #2

Roger A. Moody – Commissioner District #3